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On Campus with Max Shulman

(*Author of Rally Round the Flag, Boys and Barefoot Boy With Cheek*)

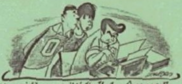
ONCE MORE UNTO THE BREACH, DEAR FRIENDS

Today I begin my tenth year of writing this column in your campus newspaper. Ten years is a long time: it is, in fact, what some scholarly people like to call a decade—from the Latin word *decum*, meaning the floor of a *ship*. It is, to my mind, remarkable that the Romans had such a word as *decum* when you consider *that ships did not exist until 1620 when* John Alden invented the Mayflower. Alden, a prodigiously ingenious man, also invented the ear lobe and Pocahontas.

Ships were a very popular mode of travel—especially over water—until 1912 when the Swede, Ivar Krueger, invented the iceberg. Krueger also invented the match, which is a good thing, because without the match, how would you light your Marlboro Cigarettes? I cannot overstress the importance of lighting your Marlboro Cig*arettes, for Marlboro Cigarettes*, unlighted, provide, at best, only limited smoking pleasure.

I mention Marlboros because this column is an advertisement, brought to you throughout the school year by the makers of Marlboros. Marlboros come in soft pack *or Flip-Top box. The makers* of Marlboros come in dark suits with thin lapels—except on weekends when they come in yoke-neck jerseys and white duck trousers. White ducks come in flocks. They are primarily fresh water dwellers, although they have been successfully raised in salt water too. Another salt water denizen I'm sure you will find *enjoyable is plankton—a mess of tiny* organisms like diatoms and algae and like that which float sluggishly near the surface of the sea. It is ironic that these creatures, microscopic in size, should supply the principal source of food for the earth's largest animal, the whale. Whales, I must say, are not at all pleased with this arrangement, because it takes the average whale, eating steadily, 48 *hours to gather a day's meal. This leaves* them almost no time for water sports or reading Melville. It is a lucky thing for all of us that whales are unaware they are mammals, not fish, and could, if they tried, live just as well on land as in water. I mean, you add ten or twelve million whales to our Sunday traffic and you would have congestion that makes the mind boggle.

But I digress. Today, I was saying, I begin my tenth year of writing this column for Marlboro Cigarettes in your campus newspaper. I will, in each column, say a few kind words about Marl*boros—just as you will, once you try* that fine tobacco flavor, that pristine white filter, that supple soft pack, that infrangible Flip-Top box. These references to Marlboro will be brief and unobtrusive, for I do not believe in the hard sell. What I favor is the soft sell—you might even call it the *limp* or *spongy* sell.



"You might even call it the limp or spongy sell"

I hasten to state that the makers of Marlboro in ten full years have not once complained about my desultory sales approach. Neither have they paid me.

But that is of small consequence. Aside from fleeting mentions of Marlboro, this *column has another, and more urgent,* mission: to cast the hot white light of free inquiry upon the vexing questions that trouble college America—questions like "Should the Student Council have the power to levy tariffs?" and "Are roommates sanitary?" and "Should housemothers be compelled to retire upon reaching the age of 26?"

Perhaps, reasoning together, we can *find the answers. Perhaps not. But if* we fail, let it never be said that it was for want of trying.

I thank you.

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The makers of Marlboro are happy to bring you another year of Max Shulman's unpredictable and uncensored column—and also happy to bring you fine filtered Marlboros, available in pack or box, wherever cigarettes are sold in all 50 states.